

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 179725

64

ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 L-03 PRS-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 A-01 AID-05 DHA-02

OMB-01 OPR-02 SCS-03 SCA-01 SCCT-01 SY-05 EB-07

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AF - MR. BLAKE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL KADUNA NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL IBADAN NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PGOR, PGOV, NI

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE ON NIGERIAN COUP

REF: STATE 178551

1. THE FOLLOWING IS GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR USE BY THE
DEPARTMENT'S SPOKESMAN ON AN IF ASKED BASIS JULY 30:

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PAGE 02 STATE 179725

2. WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN NIGERIA SINCE YESTERDAY?

AS THE WIRE SERVICES HAVE REPORTED, A NEW HEAD OF STATE, BRIG. MURTULA MUHAMMED, HAS BEEN NAMED, AS WELL AS NEW SENIOR MILITARY COMMANDERS. THERE IS CALM IN LAGOS AS WELL AS IN OTHER MAJOR NIGERIAN CITIES. A CURFEW DOES REMAIN IN EFFECT, THE AIRPORT IS STILL CLOSED, AND WE UNDERSTAND TELEX CIRCUITS ARE CLOSED. OUR EMBASSY REPORTS THAT ALL OF THE ESTIMATED 3,000 AMERICANS IN NIGERIA ARE WELL. THE GOVERNMENT WHICH APPEARS TO BE IN PROCESS OF FORMATION HAS MADE NO POLICY STATEMENTS.

2. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT BRIG. MUHAMMED?

HE WAS BORN AT KANO IN NORTHERN NIGERIA ON NOVEMBER 8, 1938 AND IS A MEMBER OF THE HAUSA TRIBE. HE GRADUATED FROM

SANDHURST IN 1961 AND HAS BEEN A SIGNALS SPECIALIST FOR MUCH OF HIS MILITARY CAREER. HE WAS COMMISSIONER FOR COMMUNICATIONS IN THE GOWON GOVERNMENT.

3. WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO GOWON?

WE HAVE SEEN PRESS REPORTS THAT HE LEFT KAMPALA FOR AN UNKNOWN DESTINATION. WE HAVE NO INFORMATION OF OUR OWN.

4. HAS THE U.S. RECOGNIZED THE NEW REGIME?

OUR NORMAL PRACTICE IN INSTANCES SUCH AS THIS IS TO MONITOR THE SITUATION CLOSELY, MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH OFFICIALS AT THE WORKING LEVEL BUT REFRAINING FROM MAJOR INITIATIVES. A DECISION REGARDING RESUMPTION OF FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS USUALLY IS POSTPONED UNTIL THE SITUATION IS MORE CLEAR THAN AT PRESENT. INGERSOLL

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